

Michelle K. Fossum, WSBA #20249
Sayre Sayre & Fossum, P.S.
201 W. North River Drive, Suite #460
Spokane, WA 99201
Tel: (509) 325-7330
michelle@sayrelaw.com
gina@sayrelaw.com

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON**

VIRGINIA VALDEZ,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT,
a municipal corporation, THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; and
GRANT COUNTY HEALTH
DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS,

Defendants.

No.: 2:21-cv-00223

**CERTIFICATE OF
SERVICE AND FILING
AT STATE COURT OF
NOTICE TO ADVERSE
PARTY OF FILING
NOTICE OF REMOVAL
IN FEDERAL COURT**

I, GINA CHRISTENSEN, hereby certify and declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 years old and not a party to this action.
2. On July 27, 2021, the Notice to Adverse Party and State Court of

Filing Notice of Removal in Federal Court was sent via the U.S. Mail to be
filed with the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Grant County.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE AND
FILING AT STATE COURT OF
NOTICE TO ADVERSE PARTY
OF FILING NOTICE OF REMOVAL IN
FEDERAL COURT....P.1


1 3. I sent a copy of the Notice to Adverse Party and State Court of
2 Filing Notice of Removal in Federal Court via electronic mail and the U.S.
3 Mail on all parties who have appeared in the action as follows:
4

5 Corbin O. Earl, Attorney for Plaintiff Valdez
6 Earl and Edwards, PLLC
7 1334 S. Pioneer Way
8 Moses Lake, WA 98837
9 corbin@earlandedwards.com

10 4. Copies of all documents filed and served are attached hereto as
11 Exhibit A.

12 I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

13 DATED this 27th day of July, 2021 in Spokane, Washington.

14 
15 Gina Christensen

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE AND
FILING AT STATE COURT OF
NOTICE TO ADVERSE PARTY
OF FILING NOTICE OF REMOVAL IN
FEDERAL COURT....P.2

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

The undersigned declares under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that on this day, I electronically filed a true and accurate copy of the document to which this declaration is affixed with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF System, which will send notification of such filing to the following:

Corbin O. Earl
Earl and Edwards, PLLC
1334 S. Pioneer Way
Moses Lake, WA 98837
corbin@earlandedwards.com

Dated this 27th day of July, 2021, at Spokane, Washington.

/s/ Gina Christensen
Gina Christensen, Paralegal
Sayre Sayre & Fossum, P.S.
201 W. North River Dr., Ste. #460
Spokane, WA 99201
Tel: (509)-325-7330
Fax: (509)-325-7334
gina@sayrelaw.com

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE AND
FILING AT STATE COURT OF
NOTICE TO ADVERSE PARTY
OF FILING NOTICE OF REMOVAL IN
FEDERAL COURT....P.3

EXHIBIT A

July 27, 2021

COPY

Grant County Superior Court
Attn: Court Clerk
P.O. Box 37
Ephrata, WA 98823

Re: *Virginia Valdez v. Grant County Health District, et al*
Grant County Superior Court: #21-2-00385-13

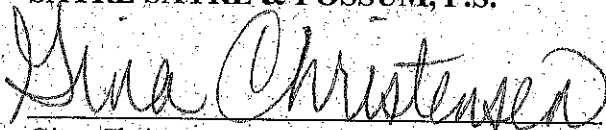
Dear Clerk of Court:

Enclosed please find the original Notice to Adverse Party and State Court of Filing Notice of Removal in Federal Court for filing. I have included a copy of the same without the attachments to be conformed and returned in the self-addressed enclosed envelope.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Regards,

SAYRE SAYRE & FOSSUM, P.S.



Gina Christensen
Paralegal to Michelle K. Fossum

enclosures



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7 **IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**
8 **IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF GRANT**

9 VIRGINIA VALDEZ,

10 Plaintiff,

11 vs.

12 GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
13 municipal corporation, THERESA ADKINSON,
14 an individual; GRANT COUNTY HEALTH
DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS,

15 Defendants.
16
17 ---

)
)
)
) **No.: 21-2-00385-13**

) **NOTICE TO ADVERSE PARTY**
) **AND STATE COURT OF**
) **FILING NOTICE OF**
) **REMOVAL IN FEDERAL**
) **COURT**

18 TO: GRANT COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CLERK

19 AND TO: VIRGINIA VALDEZ, by and through her attorney of record, Corbin
O. Earl.

20 Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(d), Defendants Grant County Health District, Theresa
21 Adkinson, and the Grant County Health District Board Members hereby give notice that on
22 July 26, 2021, they filed a Notice of Removal in the United States District Court for the
23 Eastern District of Washington.
24

25 A true and correct copy of the Notice of Removal (with Attachment) is attached

1 hereto as Exhibit A.

2 DATED this 26th day of July, 2021.

3
4 SAYRE SAYRE & FOSSUM, P.S.


5
6 By: Michelle K. Fossum
7 Michelle K. Fossum, WSBA #20249
8 Attorneys for Defendants
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 27 day of July, 2021, I caused to be served a copy of the original document attached hereto of the NOTICE TO ADVERSE PARTY AND STATE COURT OF FILING NOTICE OF REMOVAL IN FEDERAL COURT in the manner indicated:

Corbin O. Earl
Earl and Edwards, PLLC
1334 S. Pioneer Way
Moses Lake, WA 98837
Tel: (509) 765-1708
corbin@earlandedwards.com

☐ By Hand
☒ By U.S. Mail
☐ By Facsimile
☒ By Messenger
☒ By Electronic Mail
☐ By UPS/Overnight


Gina Christensen

Michelle K. Fossum, WSBA #20249
Sayre Sayre & Fossum, P.S.
201 W. North River Drive, Suite #460
Spokane, WA 99201
Tel: (509) 325-7330
michelle@sayrelaw.com
gina@sayrelaw.com

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON**

VIRGINIA VALDEZ,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT,
a municipal corporation, THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; and
GRANT COUNTY HEALTH
DISTRICT BOARD MEMBERS,

Defendants.

No.: 2:21-cv-00223

**NOTICE OF REMOVAL
OF ACTION UNDER
28 U.S.C. § 1441(a)
(FEDERAL QUESTION)**

TO: THE CLERK OF THE ABOVE-ENTITLED COURT:

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that Defendants Grant County Health
District, Theresa Adkinson, and the Grant County Health District Board
Members, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§1331, 1441 and 1446 hereby remove to this
Court the state court action described below and provide the following
information in support of its removal.

NOTICE OF REMOVAL OF ACTION ... P. 1

201 W. North River Dr., Suite 460 Spokane, WA 99201-2262
(509) 325-7330 FAX (509) 325-7334

**SAYRE SAYRE
& FOSSUM** ATTORNEYS AT LAW

I. STATEMENT OF THE CASE

1. On or about June 30, 2021 an action entitled *Virginia Valdez v. Grant County Health District, Theresa Adkinson and Grant County Health District Board Members* was commenced in the Superior Court of the State of Washington for Grant County by filing a Complaint. An Amended Complaint was filed on July 13, 2021. True and correct copies of the Complaint and Amended Complaint are attached hereto as Exhibit A.

2. The Complaint lists Grant County Health District, Theresa Adkinson, and the Grant County Health District Board Members as Defendants.

3. The Complaint asserts federal and state causes of action, including violations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, codified at 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1).

II. FEDERAL QUESTION AND SUPPLEMENTAL JURISDICTION

4. This Court has original jurisdiction over the action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1331 because the Complaint on its face states federal questions arising under 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1). (Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended).

5. This Court has jurisdiction over the state law claims pursuant to the doctrine of supplemental jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. §1367(a), as they are

1 related to the federal claim and form part of the same case or controversy.

2 6. To the extent that any claims alleged in the Complaint are not
3 found to be subject to original or supplemental jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. §§
4 1331 and 1367(a), the action is removable under 28 U.S.C. §1441(c).
5

6 **III. PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS**

7 7. Joinder: All Defendants who have been served with a summons
8 and complaint have joined in this Notice of Removal.
9

10 8. Timeliness: None of the Defendants were served with the
11 original Complaint. Grant County Health District was served with the
12 Amended Complaint on July 12, 2021. Theresa Adkinson was served with the
13 Amended Complaint on July 13, 2021. On information and belief, the Grant
14 County Health District Board Members have not yet been served. This Notice
15 of Removal is filed within thirty days of service of the summons and
16 complaint. Removal is therefore timely in accordance with 28 U.S.C. §
17 1446(b).
18
19
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21 9. Venue: Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Washington
22 pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §1391(b)(1) and (2), because all Defendants reside in
23 this District and a substantial part of the event or actions alleged in the
24 Complaint occurred in this District. This Notice of Removal is filed in the
25 District Court of the United States for the District in which this suit was filed

1 and, therefore, complies with 28 U.S.C. § 1446(a).

2 10. Notice to Adverse Parties and State Court: Pursuant to 28 U.S.C.
3 § 1446(d), Grant County Health District will promptly serve a written notice of
4 filing this Notice of Removal with the Superior Court of the State of
5 Washington for Grant County.
6

7 11. State Court Records: Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1446(a), a true and
8 correct copy of all the process, pleadings, orders, and documents from the
9 State Court action which have been served upon Defendants, other than the
10 Complaint and Amended Complaint are attached as Exhibit B.
11

12 IV. CONCLUSION

13
14 Based on the above, Defendants respectfully request that Cause No. 21-
15 2-00385-13, currently pending against them in the Superior Court for the State
16 of Washington for Grant County be removed to this Court.
17

18 DATED this 26th day of July, 2021.
19

20 SAYRE SAYRE & FOSSUM, P.S.

21 By: Michelle K. Fossum
22 Michelle K. Fossum, WSBA #20249
23 Attorneys for Defendants Grant County
24 Health District, Theresa Adkinson and
25 Grant County Health District Board of
Health Members

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DECLARATION OF SERVICE

The undersigned declares under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that on this day, I electronically filed a true and accurate copy of the document to which this declaration is affixed with the Clerk of the Court using the CM/ECF System, which will send notification of such filing to the following:

Corbin O. Earl, WSBA #52300
Earl and Edwards, P.L.L.C.
1334 S. Pioneer Way
Moses Lake, WA 98837
Telephone: (509) 765-1705
corbin@earlandedwards.com

Dated this 21st day of July, 2021, at Spokane, Washington.

/s/Gina Christensen

Gina Christensen, Paralegal
Sayre Sayre & Fossum, P.S.
201 W. North River Dr., Ste. #460
Spokane, WA 99201
Tel: (509) 325-7330
Fax: (509) 325-7334
gina@sayrelaw.com

EXHIBIT A

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
COUNTY OF GRANT

VIRGINIA VALDEZ,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
municipal corporation; THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; GRANT
COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD
MEMBERS

Defendant.

NO. 21-2-00385-13

COMPLAINT

Comes now Plaintiff Virginia Valdez ("Plaintiff" or "Virginia"), by and through the undersigned attorney, Corbin Earl, and brings this lawsuit against Defendants Grant County Health District ("GCHD"), Theresa Adkinson ("Adkinson"), and Grant County Health District Board Members ("GCHDBM"). In support of these allegations, Plaintiff states:

I. PLAINTIFF

1. Plaintiff Virginia Valdez is a resident of Grant County, Washington.

II. DEFENDANTS



1 2. Defendant GCHD is a Washington municipal corporation responsible for public
2 health in Grant County.

3 3. Defendant GCHDM is an entity of elected members who oversee the functioning
4 and operation of the Grant County Health District.

5 4. Defendant Adkinson is an individual and the Administrator of GCHD. Adkinson's
6 responsibilities as Administrator includes oversight of employees, enforcement of personnel
7 policy, and disciplinary actions.

8 III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

9 1. Plaintiff is a resident of Grant County and the State of Washington.
10 2. Defendants GCHD and GCHDBM are residences of Grant County according to
11 RCW 4.12.025(1) as they transact business in Grant County.

12 3. Defendant Adkinson is a resident of Grant County.

13 4. Grant County Superior Court is the proper venue.

14 5. Grant County Superior Court has jurisdiction RCW 49.60 *et al*

15 IV. FACTS

16 6. Plaintiff is a Hispanic woman.

17 7. On July 31, 2017, Plaintiff was hired as an Administrative Manager. In her role, she
18 supervised the front-end staff, performed human resources functions such as hiring and
19 firing.

20 8. Plaintiff also frequently worked with the Grant County Health District attorney, Katherine
21 Kenison ("Kenison"), on employment matters.
22



- 1 9. Plaintiff was hired into this role for her human resources expertise. Plaintiff also performed
2 payroll functions. GCHD had never had human resource personnel before Plaintiff's hiring.
- 3 10. Plaintiff immediately noticed that certain employees were getting paid higher wages based
4 upon preference.
- 5 11. GCHD has a step scale for salary that was based on tenure however employees at GCHD
6 were being moved on the pay scale based on preference instead.
- 7 12. Plaintiff also noticed that the male manager was being paid higher than her and the other
8 female manager even though all three managers had comparable credentials.
- 9 13. On November 9, 2017, Plaintiff received a complaint of harassment from Kathleen Nelson
10 ("Nelson") against the Administrator Adkinson. Nelson claimed that Adkinson came into
11 her office and berated her in front of Nelson's employees that she supervised.
- 12 14. Nelson claimed that Adkinson took this action because of her age and that Adkinson
13 wanted to terminate her.
- 14 15. Nelson expressed to Plaintiff that she was in fear for her job.
- 15 16. Nelson also claimed the harassment took place on November 8, 2017.
- 16 17. Plaintiff began an investigation into Nelson's claims and interviewed employees.
- 17 18. Numerous employees claimed they were in fear for their jobs and feared that Adkinson
18 would take retaliatory action against them. Heather Massart made a claim that Adkinson
19 had treated her in the same manner but was afraid to say anything for fear it would harm
20 her career.
- 21 19. On November 10, 2017, Plaintiff met with Health Officer, Alex Brzny ("Brzny"), district
22 attorney Kenison, and GCHDBM Chairman and Seat #7, Tony Massa ("Massa"). Plaintiff



1 gave copies of her investigative notes to all of them. Massa, Brzny, and Kenison decided
2 that Plaintiff would continue interviewing witnesses and Kenison would interview
3 Adkinson.

4 20. There was no follow up to the investigation and Plaintiff was cut out of the loop.

5 21. In February 2018, Janice Corbin ("Corbin") was hired as a consultant to conduct a lengthy
6 "climate survey" to see how the culture in the office was. She had conducted a survey
7 before for the district.

8 22. Corbin works for Sound Employment Solutions, LLC which offers a variety of services
9 including management coaching, confliction resolution, investigations, risk assessments,
10 and other similar services.

11 23. Plaintiff received numerous complaints from multiple employees against Corbin about how
12 she interviewed employees and made recommendations about who to terminate.

13 24. Employees once again expressed fear to Plaintiff about losing their jobs and did not want
14 to participate in the climate survey.

15 25. Plaintiff voiced these concerns to Adkinson and Massa. They told Plaintiff that the survey
16 would take place whether people like it or not and that she "better get on board."

17 26. In March 2018, Corbin concluded her interviews. She handpicked employees that she
18 recommends should be terminated including Vicky Rutherford who had made claims
19 against Adkinson for disability discrimination and Nelson who made a claim about age
20 discrimination. Plaintiff was on the phone call when Corbin made the above
21 recommendations to Adkinson.
22



1 27. Corbin herself was also involved in the furtherance of a hostile working environment. One
2 employee came to Plaintiff and told her that Corbin had inappropriately touched her and
3 made a sexually suggestive comment,

4 28. Corbin also made a statement about Plaintiff's race/ethnicity. Corbin stated that first
5 generation students of Mexican heritage have to work harder to be successful because
6 Plaintiff's parents had to "work in the fields."

7 29. Plaintiff sent an email to district attorney Kension and board chair Massa voicing concerns
8 about the report by Corbin and about Corbin herself.

9 30. On April 6, Adkinson called Plaintiff, and very defensively questioned why Plaintiff sent
10 an email to Kension and stated that it should have waited until Adkinson was back in the
11 office because she was out of town.

12 31. On April 13, 2018, Plaintiff met with Kenison at her office in Ephrata to voice concerns
13 about the climate survey, Corbin, and the harassment claims. Kenison denied that there
14 was any wrongdoing and failed to conduct any follow up about these claims.

15 32. Plaintiff also stated the employees were in fear of their jobs and afraid of Adkinson and
16 Corbin. Kenison informed Adkinson of the meeting which should have been confidential.

17 33. On April 26, 2018 Adkinson and Corbin came into Plaintiff's office and delivered a notice
18 of discipline hearing. There was a scheduled *Loudermill* hearing. They asked Plaintiff to
19 gather her possessions and relinquish her keys.

20 34. Plaintiff did not say anything and gathered her possessions. Corbin then said to Plaintiff
21 "you knew this was coming, didn't you?"

22 35. On April 30, 2018, Plaintiff participated the *Loudermill* hearing.



1 36. Plaintiff arrived for her meeting and was asked to wait. Kenison came in late like she wasn't
2 expecting a meeting. Her hair was not done and she appeared frazzled.

3 37. Plaintiff went into Adkinson's office with both of them and read a statement about all of
4 her concerns of retaliation and harassment. There was no follow up to the claims.

5 38. On May 7, 2018 Plaintiff's employment with Grant County Health District was officially
6 terminated.

7 39. In and around November and December of 2018, Plaintiff filed claims with both the EEOC
8 and the Washington State Human Rights Commission. Investigations were ongoing up
9 until April of 2021.

10 40. On April 29, 2021, a Standard Tort Claim form for Plaintiff was delivered to the
11 Grant County Auditor's office.

12 41. 60 days have elapsed since the Tort Claim Form was served.

13 V. CAUSES OF ACTION

14 Count I: Retaliation in Violation of the Washington Law Against Discrimination 15 ("WLAD")

16 42. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations
17 contained above.

18 43. Defendants' conduct against Plaintiff, as herein outlined, constitutes retaliation in
19 violation of RCW 49.60.210(1), which prohibits an employer from discriminating against an
20 employee because she has opposed a discriminatory practiced protected by the WLAD.

21 44. Plaintiff, as part of her job duties, was investigating claims of discrimination
22 brought to her by multiple employees against Adkinson.



1 45. Plaintiff was terminated from employment by Adkinson when Plaintiff brought
2 concerns to GCHD's attorney, Kenison, about Adkinson's decision to terminate at least two
3 employees who had made discrimination claims against Adkinson.

4 46. Plaintiff's disciplinary action and termination were predicated upon Plaintiff
5 contacting Kenison about discrimination by Adkinson.

6 47. As a result of the retaliatory action taken by Defendants Adkinson, GCHD, and
7 GCHDBM, Plaintiff is entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future earnings, compensatory
8 damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress, humiliation, pain & suffering, loss
9 of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.

10 Count II: Racial Discrimination in Violation of the WLAD

11 48. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained
12 above.

13 49. Plaintiff is Hispanic

14 50. Plaintiff is paid less than the white supervisor who is similarly situated in work experience
15 and education. Plaintiff and the white supervisor share similar duties and responsibilities.

16 51. Corbin told Plaintiff that she had to work harder because her parent's worked in the field
17 because they were Mexican.

18 52. Because of the disparate treatment, Plaintiff entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future
19 earnings, compensatory damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress,
20 humiliation, pain & suffering, loss of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.

21 Count III: Gender Discrimination in Violation of the WLAD



1 53. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained
2 above.

3 54. Plaintiff is a female.

4 55. Plaintiff is paid less than the male supervisor who is similarly situated in work experience
5 and education. Plaintiff and the male supervisor share similar duties and responsibilities.

6 56. The male supervisor is also paid more than the other female supervisor who is who is
7 similarly situated in terms of work responsibilities, duties, work experience, and education.

8 57. Because of the disparate treatment, Plaintiff entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future
9 earnings, compensatory damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress,
10 humiliation, pain & suffering, loss of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.

11 VI. DAMAGES

12 58. Defendant's tortious conduct caused Plaintiff's injuries and general damages,
13 including Plaintiff's pain and suffering, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, loss of
14 enjoyment, loss of quality of life, loss of parental relationship.

15 VII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

16 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendant, as follows:

17 A. For a judgment of liability in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants in an amount
18 to be decided at the time of trial;

19 B. For an award of general damages in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendant in an
20 amount to be decided at the time of trial;

21 C. For an award of special damages in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants;


22 D. For Plaintiff's costs and disbursements herein and reasonable attorney's fees;

E. For such further relief as the Court finds appropriate, equitable, or just.



1 DATED: June 30, 2021

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3 Respectfully submitted,

4 

5
6 Corbin O. Earl WSBA #52300

7 Attorney for Plaintiff



RANDI HERRIN
FILED

2021 JUL 13 PM 1:02

KIMBERLY A. ALLEN
GRANT COUNTY CLERK

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON
COUNTY OF GRANT

VIRGINIA VALDEZ,

Plaintiff,

vs.

NO. 21-2-00385-13

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
municipal corporation; THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; GRANT
COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD

AMENDED COMPLAINT

Defendant.

Comes now Plaintiff Virginia Valdez ("Plaintiff" or "Virginia"), by and through the undersigned attorney, Corbin Earl, and brings this lawsuit against Defendants Grant County Health District ("GCHD"), Theresa Adkinson ("Adkinson"), and Grant County Health District Board ("GCHDB"). In support of these allegations, Plaintiff states:

I. PLAINTIFF

1. Plaintiff Virginia Valdez is a resident of Grant County, Washington.

II. DEFENDANTS



- 1 2. Defendant GCHD is a Washington municipal corporation responsible for public health in
2 Grant County.
- 3 3. Defendant GCHDb is an entity of elected members who oversee the functioning and
4 operation of the Grant County Health District.
- 5 4. Defendant Adkinson is an individual and the Administrator of GCHD. Adkinson's
6 responsibilities as Administrator includes oversight of employees, enforcement of
personnel policy, and disciplinary actions.

7 III. JURISDICTION AND VENUE

- 8 5. Plaintiff is a resident of Grant County and the State of Washington.
- 9 6. Defendants GCHD and GCHDB are residents of Grant County according to RCW
10 4.12.025(1) as they transact business in Grant County.
- 11 7. Defendant Adkinson is a resident of Grant County.
- 12 8. Grant County Superior Court is the proper venue.
- 13 9. Grant County Superior Court has jurisdiction RCW 49.60 et al

14 IV. FACTS

- 15 10. Plaintiff is a Hispanic woman.
- 16 11. On July 31, 2017, Plaintiff was hired as an Administrative Manager. In her role, she
17 supervised the front-end staff, performed human resources functions such as hiring and
18 firing.
- 19 12. Plaintiff also frequently worked with the Grant County Health District attorney, Katherine
20 Kenison ("Kenison"), on employment matters.



1 13. Plaintiff was hired into this role for her human resources expertise. Plaintiff also performed
2 payroll functions. GCHD had never had human resource personnel before Plaintiff's hiring.

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4 upon preference.

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8 female manager even though all three managers had comparable credentials.

9 17. On November 9, 2017, Plaintiff received a complaint of harassment from Kathleen Nelson
10 ("Nelson") against the Administrator Adkinson. Nelson claimed that Adkinson came into
11 her office and berated her in front of Nelson's employees that she supervised.

12 18. Nelson claimed that Adkinson took this action because of her age and that Adkinson
13 wanted to terminate her.

14 19. Nelson expressed to Plaintiff that she was in fear for her job.

15 20. Nelson also claimed the harassment took place on November 8, 2017.

16 21. Plaintiff began an investigation into Nelson's claims and interviewed employees.

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18 would take retaliatory action against them. Heather Massart made a claim that Adkinson
19 had treated her in the same manner but was afraid to say anything for fear it would harm
20 her career.

21 23. On November 10, 2017, Plaintiff met with Health Officer, Alex Brzny ("Brzny"), district
22 attorney Kenison, and GCHDBM Chairman and Seat #7, Tony Massa ("Massa"). Plaintiff



1 gave copies of her investigative notes to all of them. Massa, Brzny, and Kenison decided
2 that Plaintiff would continue interviewing witnesses and Kenison would interview
3 Adkinson.

4 24. There was no follow up to the investigation and Plaintiff was cut out of the loop.

5 25. In February 2018, Janice Corbin ("Corbin") was hired as a consultant to conduct a lengthy
6 "climate survey" to see how the culture in the office was. She had conducted a survey
7 before for the district.

8 26. Corbin works for Sound Employment Solutions, LLC which offers a variety of services
9 including management coaching, conflict resolution, investigations, risk assessments,
10 and other similar services.

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12 she interviewed employees and made recommendations about who to terminate.

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14 to participate in the climate survey.

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16 would take place whether people like it or not and that she "better get on board."

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18 recommends should be terminated including Vicky Rutherford who had made claims
19 against Adkinson for disability discrimination and Nelson who made a claim about age
20 discrimination. Plaintiff was on the phone call when Corbin made the above
21 recommendations to Adkinson.



1 31. Corbin herself was also involved in the furtherance of a hostile working environment. One
2 employee came to Plaintiff and told her that Corbin had inappropriately touched her and
3 made a sexually suggestive comment.

4 32. Corbin also made a statement about Plaintiff's race/ethnicity. Corbin stated that first
5 generation students of Mexican heritage have to work harder to be successful because
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16 Corbin. Kenison informed Adkinson of the meeting which should have been confidential.

17 37. On April 26, 2018, Adkinson and Corbin came into Plaintiff's office and delivered a notice
18 of discipline hearing. There was a scheduled *Loudermill* hearing. They asked Plaintiff to
19 gather her possessions and relinquish her keys.

20 38. Plaintiff did not say anything and gathered her possessions. Corbin then said to Plaintiff
21 "you knew this was coming, didn't you?"

22 39. On April 30, 2018, Plaintiff participated the *Loudermill* hearing.



1 40. Plaintiff arrived for her meeting and was asked to wait. Kenison came in late like she wasn't
2 expecting a meeting. Her hair was not done and she appeared frazzled.

3 41. Plaintiff went into Adkinson's office with both of them and read a statement about all of
4 her concerns of retaliation and harassment. There was no follow up to the claims.

5 42. On May 7, 2018 Plaintiff's employment with Grant County Health District was officially
6 terminated.

7 43. In and around November and December of 2018, Plaintiff filed claims with both the EEOC
8 and the Washington State Human Rights Commission. Investigations were ongoing up
9 until April of 2021.

10 44. On May 28, 2021, the EEOC and WSHRC provided a Right to Sue letter to Plaintiff.

11 45. Plaintiff looked for a Tort Claim form for the Grant County Health District but did not find
12 any information or forms to satisfy RCW 4.96.020(3)(c).

13 46. Grant County Health District does not have a form available at their office and does not
14 any information on how to get the tort claim form.

15 47. The Grant County Auditor has listed as an agent for the Grant County Health District the
16 Administrator and Deputy Administrator for the Grant County Health District but has their
17 address as 332 Division Ave W, Ephrata, WA 98823.

18 48. Grant County Health District did not have the Standard Tort Claim Form available and did
19 not have the correct information for its agent and is in violation of RCW 4.96.020(2) and
20 RCW 4.96.020(3)(c).

21 49. Despite these violations, Plaintiff attempted to serve a Grant County Tort Claim Form on
the Grant County Auditor as the instructions provided.



1 50. On April 29, 2021, a Standard Tort Claim form for Plaintiff was delivered to the Grant
2 County Auditor's office.

3 51. 60 days have elapsed since the Tort Claim Form was served.

4 52. Plaintiff filed the original Complaint and Jury Demand on June 30, 2021.

5 V. CAUSES OF ACTION

6 Count I: Retaliation in Violation of the Washington Law Against Discrimination 7 ("WLAD")

8 53. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained
9 above.

10 54. Defendants' conduct against Plaintiff, as herein outlined, constitutes retaliation in violation
11 of RCW 49.60.210(1), which prohibits an employer from discriminating against an
12 employee because she has opposed a discriminatory practiced protected by the WLAD.

13 55. Plaintiff, as part of her job duties, was investigating claims of discrimination brought to
14 her by multiple employees against Adkinson.

15 56. Plaintiff was terminated from employment by Adkinson when Plaintiff brought concerns
16 to GCHD's attorney, Kenison, about Adkinson's decision to terminate at least two
17 employees who had made discrimination claims against Adkinson.

18 57. Plaintiff's disciplinary action and termination were predicated upon Plaintiff contacting
19 Kenison about discrimination by Adkinson.

20 58. As a result of the retaliatory action taken by Defendants Adkinson, GCHD, and GCHDBM,
21 Plaintiff is entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future earnings, compensatory
22 damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress, humiliation, pain &
23 suffering, loss of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.



Count II: Racial Discrimination in Violation of the WLAD

59. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained above.

60. Plaintiff is Hispanic

61. Plaintiff is paid less than the white supervisor who is similarly situated in work experience and education. Plaintiff and the white supervisor share similar duties and responsibilities.

62. Corbin told Plaintiff that she had to work harder because her parent's worked in the field because they were Mexican.

63. Because of the disparate treatment, Plaintiff entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future earnings, compensatory damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress, humiliation, pain & suffering, loss of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.

Count III: Gender Discrimination in Violation of the WLAD

64. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained above.

65. Plaintiff is a female.

66. Plaintiff is paid less than the male supervisor who is similarly situated in work experience and education. Plaintiff and the male supervisor share similar duties and responsibilities.

67. The male supervisor is also paid more than the other female supervisor who is who is similarly situated in terms of work responsibilities, duties, work experience, and education.

68. Because of the disparate treatment, Plaintiff entitled to back pay, front pay, impact of future earnings, compensatory damages, recovery for personal injuries for emotional distress, humiliation, pain & suffering, loss of quality of life, and attorney's fees and costs.



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1 75. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained
2 above.

3 76. Defendants took adverse employment action against Plaintiff because of Plaintiff's
4 investigation and complaint of discrimination.

5 77. These actions complained of herein violated Title VII of the Civil Rights, entitling
6 Plaintiff to recovery of general and special damages, attorney's fees, actual costs of
7 litigation, and punitive damages.

8 Count VII: Wrongful Termination in Violation of Public Policy.

9 78. Plaintiff realleges and incorporates by reference herein all of the allegations contained
10 above.

11 79. Plaintiff was terminated from employment in contravention of public policies prohibiting
12 gender discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, thereby entitling her to recovery of
13 general and special damages, attorney's fees, actual costs of litigation, and punitive
14 damages.

15 VI. DAMAGES

16 80. Defendant's tortious conduct caused Plaintiff's injuries and general damages, including
17 Plaintiff's pain and suffering, emotional distress, embarrassment, humiliation, loss of
18 enjoyment, loss of quality of life, loss of parental relationship.

19 VII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

20 WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays for judgment against Defendant, as follows:



1 A. For a judgment of liability in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants in an amount
2 to be decided at the time of trial;

3 B. For an award of general damages in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendant in an
4 amount to be decided at the time of trial;

5 C. For an award of punitive damages in favor of Plaintiff in an amount to be decided
6 at trial;

7 D. For an award of special damages in favor of Plaintiff and against Defendants;

8 E. For Plaintiff's costs and disbursements herein and reasonable attorney's fees;

9 F. For such further relief as the Court finds appropriate, equitable, or just.

10 DATED: July 12, 2021

11 Respectfully submitted,

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14 Corbin O. Earl WSBA #52300

15 Attorney for Plaintiff



EXHIBIT B

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SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN AND FOR THE
COUNTY OF GRANT

Virginia Valdez,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
municipal corporation; THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; GRANT
COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD
MEMBERS

Defendant.

Case No: 21-2-00385-13

SUMMONS

TO: THE DEFENDANT: Grant County Health District

A lawsuit has been started against you in the above-entitled court by, VIRGINIA VALDEZ, Plaintiff. Plaintiff's claims are stated in the written complaint, a copy of which is served upon you with this summons.

In order to defend against this lawsuit, you must respond to the complaint by stating your defense in writing, and by serving a copy upon the person signing this summons within twenty (20) days after the service of this summons, excluding the day of service, or a default judgment may be entered against you without notice. A default judgment is one where plaintiff is entitled



1 to what they ask for because you have not responded. If you serve a notice of appearance on the
2 undersigned person, you are entitled to notice before a default judgment may be entered.

3 You may demand that the plaintiff files this lawsuit with the court. If you do so, the
4 demand must be in writing and must be served upon the person signing this summons. Within
5 fourteen (14) days after you serve the demand, the plaintiff must file this lawsuit with the court
6 or the service on you of this summons and complaint will be void.

7 If you wish to seek the advice of an attorney in this matter, you should do so promptly so
8 that your written response, if any, may be served on time.

9 This summons is issued pursuant to Rule 4 of the Superior Court Civil Rules of the State
10 of Washington.

11 DATED this 29th day of June, 2021.
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16 Corbin O. Earl
17 Attorney for Plaintiff
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RANDI HERRIN

FILED

JUN 30 2021

KIMBERLY A. ALLEN
GRANT COUNTY CLERK

PAID \$ 125
() CASH
(V) CHECK
() CREDIT CARD

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN AND FOR THE

COUNTY OF GRANT

Virginia Valdez,

Plaintiff,

vs.

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
municipal corporation; THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; GRANT
COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD
MEMBERS

Defendant.

Case No: **21-2-00385-13**

DEMAND FOR JURY

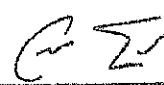
The PLAINTIFF hereby elects to have the above entitled cause tried by a jury.

The jury demand fee is hereby paid, in the amount of:

☒ Six Member Jury -- \$125.00

☐ Twelve Member Jury -- \$250.00

Dated this 29th day of JUNE, 2021.

By 

Attorney for VIRGINIA VALDEZ

Address 1334 S. PIONEER WAY, MOSES LAKE, WA 98837

Phone Number 5097651708

Bar Number 52300

**SAYRE SAYRE
& FOSSUM** ATTORNEYS AT LAW

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 20th day of July, 2021, I caused to be served a copy of the original document attached hereto of the NOTICE OF APPEARANCE in the manner indicated:

Corbin O. Earl
Earl and Edwards, PLLC
1334 S. Pioneer Way
Moses Lake, WA 99201
Tel: (509) 765-1708
corbin@earlandedwards.com

☐ By Hand
☒ By U.S. Mail
☐ By Facsimile
☐ By Messenger
☒ By Electronic Mail
☐ By UPS/Overnight


Michelle K. Fossum

NOTICE OF APPEARANCE ... P.2

201 W. North River Dr., Suite 460 Spokane, WA 99201-2262
(509) 325-7330 FAX (509) 325-7334

**SAYRE SAYRE
& FOSSUM** ATTORNEYS AT LAW

RANDI HERRIN
FILED

2021 JUL 13 PM 1:02

KIMBERLY A. ALLEN
GRANT COUNTY CLERK

SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON, IN AND FOR THE
COUNTY OF GRANT

Virginia Valdez,

Plaintiff,

vs.

Case No: 21-2-00385-13

AMENDED SUMMONS

GRANT COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT, a
municipal corporation; THERESA
ADKINSON, an individual; GRANT
COUNTY HEALTH DISTRICT BOARD
MEMBERS

Defendant.

TO: THE DEFENDANT: Grant County Health District

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1 to what they ask for because you have not responded. If you serve a notice of appearance on the
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3 You may demand that the plaintiff files this lawsuit with the court. If you do so, the
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5 fourteen (14) days after you serve the demand, the plaintiff must file this lawsuit with the court
6 or the service on you of this summons and complaint will be void.

7 If you wish to seek the advice of an attorney in this matter, you should do so promptly so
8 that your written response, if any, may be served on time.

9 This summons is issued pursuant to Rule 4 of the Superior Court Civil Rules of the State
10 of Washington.

11 DATED this 12th day of July, 2021.
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15 Corbin O. Earl
16 Attorney for Plaintiff
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